

XVII.—On some new or little-known Birds from the Cape Colony.

By Dr. G. HARTLAUB.

DR. SCLATER having submitted to my examination a small series of birds' skins sent to him for identification by Mr. E. L. Layard, Curator of the Museum at Cape Town, I take the liberty of offering to the readers of 'The Ibis' the following list of the species, with remarks upon such of them as appear to me to be new or of interest. The localities and some remarks are added from Mr. Layard's MSS.

Fam. CAPRIMULGIDÆ.

1. COSMETORNIS VEXILLARIA (Gould).

Probably a *young male* of this curious species. The elongated wing-feathers are only partially developed; they are of a pure white on the basal part of the inner web. Nuchal collar pale rufous; abdomen whitish with black transverse bands; throat and breast rufous and dark-brownish-banded. The localities hitherto assigned to this extraordinary form are: Madagascar (Liénard); mouth of the River Quilimane (Sir Wm. Jardine); Angola (Gabriel). The present example, as Mr. Layard informs us, was obtained in Damara-land by Mr. Andersson.

2. CAPRIMULGUS ATROVARIUS, Sundev.; Grill, Victor. Zool. Antekn. p. 41.

From Rondebosch, obtained by Mr. Fry. (E. L. L.)

3. CAPRIMULGUS SMITHII, Bp.

Environs of Cape Town. (E. L. L.)

4. CAPRIMULGUS LENTIGINOSUS, Smith (?).

Environs of Cape Town. (E. L. L.)

Fam. HIRUNDINIDÆ.

5. HIRUNDO HOLOMELAS, Sundev. Ofvers. 1850, p. 108; Grill, Victor. Zool. Antekn. p. 36. *Psolidoprocne cypselina*, Cab.

"This little Swallow first fell under my notice on the Keurbooms River, Knysna district, where I saw it apparently breeding in the holes in the banks, but I was unable to investigate its doings more closely. I found it abundant in the forest, hawk-

ing after flies over the pools, frequently dipping into the water, and perching on the overhanging boughs in clusters of six or eight, to dry itself. It perches constantly and habitually on trees, and thus may be at once distinguished from *Cypselus velox*, which one of our zoological friends here thinks Levaillant may have described from this species.

“This habit of perching is noted by Mr. Cairncross, who writes, ‘This bird flies about very much like a bat [this resemblance also occurred to us when we saw it], amongst thick forests of trees, and is generally more visible in rainy, heavy weather ; but I have never seen or heard of their breeding here (Swellendam). They remain here after the winter has set in. Sometimes I have seen them roost on trees at the bottom of my garden, where I shot the specimen sent.’” (E. L. L.)

6. *HIRUNDO DIMIDIATA*, Sundev. *l. c.* ; Grill, *l. c.* p. 36.

The supposed identity of this species with the *H. leucosoma* of Western and Southern Africa (Sundev.) remains still very doubtful. The white markings on the wings and tail are different.

“This Swallow is very rare in the neighbourhood of Cape Town, but becomes more common towards the mainland. Writing from Cape Town, it will be as well to treat of this peninsula as apart from the continent. The vast tract of sand called the ‘Cape Flats,’ together with Table Bay on the one hand and False Bay on the other, quite shut it off from the main land, so to speak ; and to aid in the isolation, the main land ends in an abrupt precipitous wall of mountains, which are only to be passed in one or two places. Doubtless the peninsula of Table Mountain was once an island entirely cut off from the main land, and ‘Table’ and ‘False Bays’ part of a strait between. As soon as the hills are reached on the opposite side of Table Bay, this Swallow commences ; and at Swellendam, Mr. Cairncross writes, ‘it is very common, and builds its nest generally under the thatch of an old mill or stable, where it is quieter than in a dwelling-house ; it lays a small white egg ; and tradition says it drives the Sparrow and House Swallow (*H. capensis*?) from their nests, occupies them, and breeds therein. For this reason it receives no mercy from the farmer, but its eggs and young are destroyed whenever met with.’” (E. L. L.)

7. *HIRUNDO PALUSTRIS*, Steph.

"Found about the neighbourhood of water, generally in company with *H. paludicola*. Received from Mr. Cairncross of Swellendam, and Mr. Jackson of Nilsport, in the Beaufort division." (E. L. L.)

8. *COTYLE FULIGULA*, Licht.

"From Beaufort." (E. L. L.)

Fam. *ALCEDINIDÆ*.

9. *HALCYON FUSCICAPILLA*, Lafr.

"Mr. Atmore assures me that this species (no. 28) is plentiful at Swellendam, and that when he is digging in his garden specimens may always be seen perched on the trees near, from which they dart down on the worms as he turns them up with his spade." (E. L. L.)

Fam. *UPUPIDÆ*.

10. *RHINOPOMASTES CYANOMELAS*, Vieill.

Kuruman (Mr. Moffat); Damara-land (Andersson).

Fam. *LUSCINIIDÆ*.

11. *CALAMOHERPE RUFESCENS* (Keys. & Bl.); Grill, *l. c.* p. 28.

One example is in the collection, marked "*L'Isabelle?*". It is probably a young bird of this species, "from Swellendam."

12. *LUSCINIA SPERATA* (Lath.), Sundev. Obs. in Levall. Ois. d'Afr. p. 44; Grill, *l. c.* p. 27.

I have seen but few of these birds, and those only in the summer months, among the stones just below the Lion's Head, at an elevation of 1500 feet. (E. L. L., note on specim. no. 35.)

13. *LUSCINIA SINUATA*, Sundev. *l. c.* p. 44, nota; Grill, *l. c.* p. 27.

Descr. Supra dilutius brunnea, subtus multo pallidior in vinaceum vergens; mento albedo; crisso, subcaudalibus, subalaribus et cruribus albidis; uropygio cinnamomeo-rufo; hypochondriis subrufescentibus; remigibus fusco-nigris; *horum secundo ad apicem profunde sinuato-angustato*; tertiariis late et conspicue rufescenti-marginatis; rectricibus omnibus ad basin isabellino-fulvescentibus, extimæ pogonio externo ad apicem usque ejusdem coloris, secundæ in pogonio

externo dimidio basali pallide rufescente; tarsi elongatis; saxicolinis, caligatis et eum rostro gracili, compresso, carinato, nigris. Long. 4" 9''' ; rostr. 5''' ; al. 2" 9''' ; caud. 1" 8''' ; tars. 1''.

Three specimens of this interesting bird, whose alar abnormality was first discovered and indicated by Sundevall. It is described here for the first time. It is not in the Berlin collection, otherwise so rich in South-African species. A nearly allied bird is the *Erythropygia galtoni* of Strickland, considered by Sundevall as only a variety of *L. sperata*. The curious apical attenuation of the second primary reminds one of certain South-American *Tæniopterinae*, as for instance of the *T. pyrope* of Kittlitz.

"Received from Colesberg, Kuruman, and Beaufort. Not found near Cape Town." (E. L. L., note on specim. no. 36.)

14. *BRADYPTERUS SYLVATICUS*, Sundev. in Grill, *l. c.* p. 30 (descr. compl.).

This is another very interesting bird, of which one example, in Mr. Layard's collection, was "received from Kuruman." I refer it at present to the very-little-known *Bradypterus sylvaticus* of Sundevall. However, the specimen being in a rather doubtful condition, I *do not feel quite sure* about this identity, and prefer giving a short description:—

Supra saturate brunneus, subrufescens, alis et cauda fuscis; uropygio lætius tincto; subtus lateraliter rufo-brunnescens, medialiter albidior; mento, gula et subalaribus albidis; subcaudalibus dilute rufescentibus, loris pallidis; pedibus pallide brunneis; rostro gracillimo, brunneo, mandibula pallidiore. Long. 5" ; rostr. 5''' ; al. 2" 3''' ; caud. a bas. 2''' ; tars. 9''.

The whole habitus of this species is *Cettia*-like: wings short, concave, rounded; beak very slender, straight, compressed; feet rather large; tail very weak, rounded; rectrices broad, weak, decomposed, &c.

15. *APALIS THORACICA* (Shaw); Grill, *l. c.* p. 31.

Layard, specim. no. 33.

16. *SYLVIELLA RUFESCENS* (Vieill.); Sundev. Obs. in Levall.

Ois. d'Afr. p. 39; Grill, *l. c.* p. 31.

Layard, specim. no. 29.

17. *ÆGITHALUS MINUTUS* (Shaw). *Le Becque-fleur*, Levaill. Ois. d'Afr. pl. 134; Sundev. Öfvers. 1850, p. 107.

Layard, specim. no. 30.

18. *PARISOMA LAYARDI*, Hartlaub, sp. nov.

Supra saturate cinereum, tergo et uropygio vix pallidioribus; remigibus fuscis, intus albo-marginatis; subalaribus albido cinereoque variis; gula alba, notis longitudinalibus cinereis varia; pectore et abdomine sordide albidis; rectricibus quatuor mediis totis nigro-fuscis, extima pro maiore parte alba (pogonio externo toto, interno ad apicem large et oblique albo), secunda ad apicem large alba; pedibus et rostro nigris. Long. fere 5"; rostr. a fr. 4"; al. 2" 4"; caud. a bas. 2" 4"; tars. 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ ".

A typical *Parisoma* which seems to be undescribed. Dr. Jean Cabanis, to whom I have submitted the bird for examination, does not know it. I hope to be justified in the opinion of every ornithologist if I name it after Mr. E. L. Layard, whose collection contains one example of this bird, labelled "*Le Coryphée*," and "received from Zwartland, in the Malmesbury division."

19. *ZOSTEROPS PALLIDA*, Swainson, An. in Menag. p. 294.

This being the first time I have met with this very rare species in South-African collections, I subjoin a description:—

Supra cinerea, *uropygio albo*, subflavescente; subtus albida, lateribus brunnescente lavatis; alis et cauda nigricanti-fuscis; subalaribus albidis; rostro fusco; pedibus cinerascentibus; annulo periophthalmico (in hoc specimine) vix conspicuo. Long. 3" 9"; rostr. 4"; al. 2" 5"; caud. 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ "; tars. 7".

A nearly allied species is *Zosterops borbonica* (Briss.). Mr. Layard's single specimen is numbered 39.

20. *ANTHUS* — ?

Parvus; supra in fundo dilute olivascanti-brunneo, maculis nigro-fuscis magnis longitudinalibus variis; remigibus tertiariis pallide marginatis; rectricibus fuscis, pallidius limbatis, extima fere tota albida, pogonio externo subfuscescente, secunda albida, intus late fusco-marginata; *subtus flavicans*, pectore maculis longitudinalibus fuscis; subalaribus flavido fuscoque variis; subcaudalibus flavescentibus; pedibus pallidis; mandibula pallida. Long. 4" 9"; rostr. 6"; al. 2" 6"; caud. 1" 9"; tars. 8"; ung. post. 6".

Allied to the *A. limonellus* of Licht. If new, *Anthus icterinus*. "From Mr. Cairncross of Swellendam." (E. L. L.)

Fam. TURDIDÆ.

21. COSSYPHA CAFFRA (Linn.). *Bessonornis caffra*, Grill, *l. c.* p. 29.

Mr. Layard's specimen (no. 30) was received from Mr. R. Moffat at Kuruman.

22. PYCNONOTUS AURIGASTER (Vieill.), Sund. Obs. in Levail. p. 36.

Layard, specimen no. 36.

Fam. MUSCICAPIDÆ.

23. BUTALIS ADUSTA, Boié.

Mr. Layard has sent one specimen (no. 23) of this species, a young bird, "from Swellendam."

Fam. LANIIDÆ.

24. MALACONOTUS ATROCOCINEUS, Burchell.

"We have received specimens of this Shrike from Kuruman, Colesberg, and Damara-land." (E. L. L.)

25. BASANISTES MELANOLEUCUS, Smith.

Layard, specimen no. 22.

26. BRADYORNIS SILENS (Shaw); Grill, Zool. Antekn. p. 33.

"Common about the Knysna and Swellendam." (E. L. L.)

Fam. STURNIDÆ.

27. LAMPROCOLIUS PHÆNICOPTERUS, Sw.

Damara-land, one example. (E. L. L.)

28. LAMPROCOLIUS MELANOGASTER, Sw.; Grill, *l. c.* p. 37.

Two specimens; one (no. 41) "believed to have been shot not far from Pietermaritzberg." (E. L. L.)

29. LAMPROCOLIUS DECORATUS, n. sp.

Totus metallice iridescent, occipite, nucha, regione parotica et tergo nonnihil cærulescentibus; macula scapulari violaceo-purpurascente, nitore cupreo; rectricibus mediis violaceo-cærulescentibus, sub certa luce conspicue fasciatis; remigum marginibus externis cærulescentibus; maculis holosericeis alarum minimis, vix conspicuis; rostro gracili et pedibus

